

Message Text

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43

ACTION VO-03

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----- 057216

P R 091120Z AUG 76

FM AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4916

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS, SA

SUBJECT: LEBANESE VISA APPLICANTS

REF: STATE 190983 (NOTAL), DHAHRAN 0909 (NOTAL)

1. RE PARA ONE OF DEPTTEL, IN JULY 1976 DHAHRAN ISSUED 14 NIV'S AND 6 IV'S TO LEBANESE NATIONALS. DURING FIRST SEVEN MONTHS OF 1976 DHAHRAN FORMALLY REFUSED APPROXIMATELY 12 LEBANESE NIV APPLICANTS. NO IV REFUSALS WERE MADE.

2. POST RECEIVES, ALMOST DAILY, INQUIRIES FROM LEBANESE NATIONALS REGARDING VISAS (BOTH NIV AND IV) TO US. MANY OF THESE APPEAR NOT QUALIFIED FOR ANY VISA AND ABANDON THEIR APPLICATIONS AFTER HAVING REQUIREMENTS EXPLAINED TO THEM. IT IS DIFFICULT TO BE CERTAIN HOW MANY LEBANESE WOULD APPLY FOR REFUGEE STATUS IF IN POSITION TO DO SO, BUT IT WOULD PROBABLY BE LARGE NUMBER. RUMOR APPEARS WIDESPREAD IN LOCAL LEBANESE COMMUNITY THAT US IS ALREADY RUNNING A REFUGEE PROGRAM. WE ARE, RECEIVING MANY INQUIRIES ON HOW TO QUALIFY. POST HAS HAD APPROXIMATELY THIRTY

APPLICANTS WHO HAVE MADE STATEMENTS INDICATING THAT THEY OR THEIR FAMILIES WOULD LIKE TO ENTER THE US FOR SAFEHAVEN UNTIL THE TROUBLES ARE OVER. IT IS VERY HARD TO JUDGE WHETHER THIS REPRESENTS

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AN ACCURATE FIGURE AS TO HOW MANY WOULD REQUEST SAFEHAVEN, AS PRE-

SUMABLY CONGEN'S NEGATIVE REPLY TO SAFEHAVEN REQUESTS ARE CIRCULATE
D

IN LEBANESE COMMUNITY AND DETER OTHERS FROM MAKING INQUIRIES.
MANY LEBANESE ARE QUITE CONFUSED NOW ABOUT THEIR OWN PLANS. DOUBT-
LESS MANY WOULD SEEK TO ENTER THE US WITH THE IDEA IN MIND THAT
THEY MIGHT STAY THERE, IF THEY LIKE IT. NUMBER OF LEBANESE SEEKING
TO STAY IN THE US MIGHT INCREASE DEPENDING ON THE LENGTH OF TIME
IT TAKES TO SETTLE THE CONFLICT AND ON TERMS OF FINAL SETTLEMENT.
REQUESTS FOR SAFEHAVEN CITED ABOVE DOES NOT INCLUDE GROUP OF
APPROXIMATELY FIFTEEN LEBANESE WHO HAVE SOUGHT ADMISSION TO US
AS STUDENTS. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT ONE MOTIVE FOR THESE YOUNG MEN TO
STUDY IN US NOW IS THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE PULLED INTO THE FIGHTING.

3. FOLLOWING ARE OUR COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS KEYED TO UNHCR
CONCLUSIONS REPORTED IN PARA 3 OF REPTTEL:
MANY INQUIRIES CONCERNING IMMIGRATION TO US HAVE ALREADY COMING
FROM LEBANESE WHO WERE WORKING IN SAUDI ARABIA EVEN BEFORE CONFLICT
BEGAN. WHILE THEY WILLING TO WORK HERE FOR A TIME, THEY OFTEN
FIND CLIMATE UNPLEASANT AND CONSERVATIVE MORES OF LOCAL SOCIETY
ANNOYINGLY RESTRICTIVE. MANY, PARTICULARLY, CHRISTIANS, APPEAR
TO FEEL AS THOUGH THIS IS CULTURAL SIBERIA. THESE LEBANESE
FEEL MORE AKIN TO WEST AND APPEAR TO BE SEEKING A STABLE COUNTRY
WITH A CONGENIAL
ESTIMATE WHERE THEY CAN INVEST THEIR SAVINGS.
IN SHORT IT IS LIKELY THAT A LARGE PROPORTION OF LEBANESE ONCE
ADMITTED TO US WOULD SEEK TO REMAIN THERE, WHILE MANY OF THE
LEBANESE WHO ARE NOT PROPERLY REFUGEES (I.E. , THOSE WHO WERE
ALREADY LIVING OUTSIDE LEBANON WHEN THE TROUBLES STARTED) WILL
SEEK TO JOIN THEIR FRIENDS AND RELATIONS IN US, IF THEIR
CONFIDENCE IN LEBANON'S POLITICAL STABILITY NOT RESTORED.

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